

ABSTRACT

CREATIVE PROJECT: *Bermudas*: How Lee Hoiby's Musical Setting enhances the Textual Interpretation of Andrew Marvell's Poem

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PAGES: 23

This project has included a performance and an analytical overview of the musical composition *Bermudas* by Lee Hoiby. *Bermudas* is based on the polemic poem of the same name by Andrew Marvell. The poem acclaims the exotic riches and natural beauties of the island Bermudas as admired from the perspective of English mariners, singing a song of joyous thanksgiving to God while rowing towards the island. What might be labelled as exaggerations and geographical inaccuracies in Marvell's poem suggest that his motive might have been to create satirical undertones within the text instead of a sincere form of Puritan praise to God. Despite this potential irony, Hoiby's musical composition for the poem uses voicing, harmonies, piano texture, and formal design to enhance a literal and sympathetic interpretation of the poetic text. The spiritual and the earthly are juxtaposed in the expressed desires of the English rowers as they travel nearer to the island of Bermudas. A deeper understanding of the text and the accompanying musical setting will enable musicians to perform Lee Hoiby's *Bermudas* more accurately and with greater appreciation.